

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [1038] with the following amended paragraph:

[1038] For a given patch cell, after processing all the via layers (v1, v2, etc.), the exemplary design flow deletes the cluster cell 104 instance and the upper level cover cell 122 instance from the patch cell 120, and leaves only the metal and vias that were added to form redundant vias, thereby removing all but the added features from the patch cell. The patch cell 120 is then preferably instantiated into the cluster cell 104, as shown in Fig. 2D (labeled as 104'). Alternately, the patch cell may be instantiated at a higher level of the design layout, such as at the top level.